British Government also expressed the hope that the German Government could see its way to interpreting the words 'Germany's south-eastern and north-eastern frontiers' so as to cover also at least the Soviet Union, Latvia, and Estonia, as well as the States actually contiguous to Germany. The German Government vouchsafed no reply to the British *questionnaire*. 648

In January 1937 there were symptoms of a recrudescence of hostility when the German press published allegations that the Lithuanian Government contemplated the reorganization of the Army under the supervision of Soviet officers, and that there was talk in Kaunas of large deliveries of arms from the U.S.S.R.

While Lithuania's relations with Germany on the whole improved, the same could not be said of her relations with Poland; and indeed, they were a matter of concern not only to the latter, who in 1936 showed a desire for reconciliation—albeit on her own terms—but also to the Latvian[1] and Estonian Governments, who realized that until the Vilna dispute had been liquidated the relations of the Baltic States with Poland could not be as close as they would like. How the Polish Government, in March 1938, finally took matters into their own hands, and forced the issue by presenting Lithuania with an ultimatum, backed by the concentration of troops on the frontier, is related in the following chapter.[2] It may be suggested here, however, that once the Vilna controversy has been settled, Poland's scheme for a neutral *bloc* stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea may be nearer to realization than at any time since the World War.

VI. SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF LITHUANIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

1. Vilna

Up to the Treaty of Union of Lublin in 1569, Vilna had been the capital of the Lithuanian Kingdom; by the time of the partitions of Poland and the Russian annexation of Lithuania at the end of the eighteenth century, however, it had become a centre of Polish, rather than of Lithuanian, culture. In 1918 the new Polish and Lithuanian States both laid claim to possession of the city and of the district surrounding it.[3] 648 361 [illegible]

When the Germans evacuated Lithuania at the end of 1918, Vilna was proclaimed the capital of the new Republic and renamed Vilnius.

[1] At the end of March 1936 the Latvian Foreign Minister visited Warsaw to discuss Polish-Lithuanian relations.

[2] See below, pp. 92–3.

[3] The ethnographical bases of the rival claims are somewhat confused. The Lithuanians claim that the only reliable census was that of 1861, which showed a proportion of 74·3 per cent. Lithuanian- to 16·2 per cent. Polish-speaking inhabitants of the relevant parts of the 162

In January 1919, however, the Lithuanian Government had to retire to Kaunas before the Bolshevik invaders; and when these in their turn retreated before the combined attacks of Lithuanian and Polish forces, it was the Poles who entered Vilna first on April 20, and who remained in possession until the second Bolshevik offensive in the summer of 1920. On July 12, 1920, Lithuania concluded a treaty of peace with Soviet Russia at Moscow, in which the province and city of Vilna were ceded to her by Russia; three days later the Red troops drove the Poles out of the city, and, on their evacuation during the Polish counter-offensive in August, they handed it over to the Lithuanians.

Tension between the latter and the Poles now became acute; fighting broke out in the Suvalki district, and on September 5 Poland appealed to the League of Nations. At the instance of the Supreme Allied Council the two countries agreed to accept a provisional frontier, known as the 'Curzon Line', giving the Suvalki sector to the Poles and the Vilna district to Lithuania; and an armistice convention to this effect was signed at Suvalki on October 7. But on the previous day an ostensibly unauthorized[1] Polish force under General Zeligowski entered the town. The General proclaimed a free and independent 'Republic of Central Lithuania', and constituted a Government consisting of two Poles, two White Russians, and two Lithuanians. On October 12 Poland concluded a preliminary peace with the R.S.F.S.R. at Riga, the first Article of which defined the Soviet-Polish frontier and stipulated that the allocation of the territories situated to the east of it under dispute between Poland and Lithuania should be exclusively settled by those two countries themselves.

The Zeligowski *coup* was followed by long-drawn-out and fruitless negotiations, first before the League Council, then in Brussels under the presidency of the Belgian Foreign Minister, M. Hymans, and finally at Geneva again. Various suggestions, e.g. the conduct of a plebiscite, the constitution of a federal State on the Swiss principle,

Vilna Government. The Poles state that the proportion of Polish inhabitants has steadily increased since 1905, the figures for the whole province of Vilna being as follows:

Census of 1897:	17	per cent.	Lithuanians,	9	per cent.	Poles.
„	1909: 13	„	„	16	„	„
„	1916: 10	„	„	30	„	„
„	1919: 10	„	„	62	„	„

The censuses conducted during the German and Polish occupations cannot, however, be taken as reliable, especially as adherence to the Catholic faith was often taken as a proof of Polish nationality. It seems clear that the Poles have a considerable numerical superiority over the Lithuanians in the city of Vilna, while the reverse is the case in most of the country districts. Actually, the prevailing elements are the Jews in the city, and the White Russians outside it.

[1] Later, however, General Pilsudski admitted—and gloried in—his responsibility for this act.

and so forth, were rejected.[1] Finally, in January 1922, the Council, despairing of a settlement, gave up the case and withdrew its commissioners from the territory, thus virtually leaving events to take their own course. A year later the Poles, rightly judging that every one was weary of the controversy, appealed to the Conference of Ambassadors, in February 1923, for official recognition of their possession of Vilna. On March 15, acting in virtue of Article 87 of the Treaty of Versailles,[2] the Conference finally disposed of the matter by laying down the Polish-Lithuanian frontier in such a way as to recognize the *status quo*.[3]

As between Poland and Lithuania, however, the quarrel was by no means settled. Indeed, up till March 1938, a state of virtual blockade existed on the frontier,[4] nor were diplomatic relations between the two countries ever resumed until that date. Lithuania refused to accept the Ambassadors' decision, but her request in June 1924 for a fresh conference was rejected. The chances of a settlement were not improved either by the Vatican's recognition of Vilna as a Polish diocese in 1925, or by the conclusion in 1926 of a Soviet-Lithuanian Pact of Non-aggression in which the U.S.S.R. reaffirmed its recognition of the Lithuanian claim to Vilna.[5] Under the dictatorships established in 1926 by Marshal Pilsudski in Poland and M. Voldemaras in Lithuania, mutual hostility was stimulated—in Lithuania's case deliberately—in spite of the League Council's efforts at reconciliation in December 1927 and again in September 1928.

After the downfall of M. Voldemaras in 1929, a certain *détente* was

[1] The Poles, however, conducted a plebiscite of their own on January 8, 1922, in the form of elections to a Diet which subsequently voted for union with Poland. The majority of the Lithuanian population in the country districts, and of the Jews in the city of Vilna, abstained from voting, and only Polish deputies were returned. The report of the League's Military Commission of Control pointed out that 'the control of the elections was entirely in the hands of the interested party', and that they were carried out under military occupation.

[2] Article 87 provided that 'the boundaries of Poland not laid down in the present Treaty will be subsequently determined by the Principal Allied and Associated Powers'.

[3] Moreover, on February 1, 1923, the Council of the League had accepted a Polish proposal that questions concerning non-Polish inhabitants of the Vilna district should henceforth be subject to the normal minorities procedure; thus, instead of being placed automatically on the Council's agenda, they were to be dealt with by a Committee of Three. This procedure was accepted by Lithuania in the minority dispute submitted to the League in October 1927.

[4] In 1925 an agreement was reached on frontier and river traffic and on postal communications, and in 1926 the Niemen was declared open to rafting; but, in fact, the frontier remained closed, since the two Powers were unable to agree as to the conditions on which it should be reopened—the Polish Government insisting on, and the Lithuanian Government refusing, the simultaneous renewal of diplomatic relations. Lithuania also persistently refused to concede consular relations to Poland, or to make a railway agreement. In 1930 the Permanent Court at The Hague gave a decision in her favour on the question as to whether she was bound to open the Landswarow-Kalliordoys railway for traffic.

[5] See above, pp. 71-2.

1: Anonymous U-4 (no date) 1938 RB1 Baltic States RB1
Lithuania

648
361

noticeable, especially when the Vilna dispute became gradually overshadowed by Lithuania's quarrel with Germany over Memel. Neither an exchange of official visits in 1934, however, nor the overtures for the resumption of diplomatic relations made by Poland towards the end of 1936 and early in 1937, resulted in any amelioration of the situation, the Lithuanian Government not being prepared to consider more than the opening of the frontier. On February 5, 1937, Colonel Beck told the Polish *Seym* that, since no satisfactory response had been received from the Lithuanian Government, Poland was now 'compelled to withdraw its faith in Lithuania's peaceful intentions and, in future, to adjust its Lithuanian policy in accordance with the methods applied by Lithuania in its attitude towards Poland'. None the less, on March 7, the Polish Foreign Office issued a *communiqué* to the effect that Poland was ready at any time to proceed with the task of normalizing her relations with Lithuania, unconditionally and on the basis of mutual recognition of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-aggression.

In the meantime, there had been increased tension in January, when the Polish authorities dissolved a Lithuanian cultural association in Vilna, suppressed a Lithuanian daily paper, and arrested several leading Lithuanians on charges of infringement of the currency laws. Frontier incidents occurred in January, and again in December 1937, when Polish soldiers were alleged, in each case, to have moved a frontier post a few yards into Lithuanian territory. In February 1938, demonstrations against the suppression of another Lithuanian paper, and the arrest of its editor, led to the placing of a ban on the activities of the Nationalist party, and to the internment of three of its leaders.

Finally, a crisis was precipitated on March 11, 1938, by a clash between Lithuanian and Polish frontier guards, in which one Polish guard was killed. On the 13th the Polish Government issued a statement accusing the Lithuanians of provocation, and threatening to take measures befitting the seriousness of the situation. The concentration of troops was reported on both sides of the frontier, while anti-Lithuanian demonstrations occurred in the Polish Senate and in the streets of Warsaw. A proposal of the Lithuanian Government that the incident should be investigated locally by a mixed commission was rejected by the Polish Government as unacceptable, and on March 17—significantly, perhaps, at a time when international relationships had just sustained the shock of the German annexation of Austria—Poland presented a forty-eight-hour ultimatum demanding the unconditional establishment of regular diplomatic relations by March 31; and stipulating that there must be no discussion of these proposals.

The Estonian and Latvian Governments appear to have informed Lithuania that they regarded the establishment of normal diplomatic relations with Poland as highly desirable; while the French and British diplomatic representatives in both capitals used their influence to urge an amicable settlement. On March 19 the Lithuanian Government accepted without reserve all the Polish propositions, and received a reply on the 20th in which the Polish Government assured the new Lithuanian Legation in Warsaw 'all conditions of normal activity'.

Negotiations between the two countries were begun almost immediately, and proceeded so successfully that by the beginning of June three conventions had been concluded for the opening of postal and railway communications, and of river navigation, while further agreements relating to aerial communications and to a commercial treaty were under negotiation.

Although the Vilna dispute has reference to an area of inconsiderable economic importance, it has had far-reaching effects both on the domestic history of Lithuania and on the relations of the Baltic States with one another and with the Soviet Union. These have been described above, and it must suffice here to recall that the efforts to achieve Baltic solidarity, in relation first to Soviet Russia and later to Nazi Germany, have always been complicated by the enduring hostility between Lithuania and Poland.

2. Memel (Klaipeda)

Introductory. The Memel Territory, consisting of the port of Memel and a strip of land about 70 miles long and from 10 to 20 miles broad, is bounded on the south by the East Prussian frontier and on the north-east by what used to be the pre-War Russo-German frontier but is now Lithuanian territory. It controls the right bank of the Niemen (Nemunas), a waterway of great importance for the floating of timber down to the Baltic from the hinterland, and embraces nearly three-quarters of the seaboard between the East Prussian and Latvian frontiers; without it, Lithuania would have no port on the Baltic Sea.

The city of Memel was founded in 1252 by the German Order of the Sword, from whom it was taken over in 1328 by the Teutonic Order, as a centre for the conquest and conversion of the Borussians; on the dissolution of the Teutonic Order in the sixteenth century, the city and surrounding territory passed into the hands of the Hohenzollerns. By the fifteenth century the indigenous population had been virtually exterminated, but Lithuanian immigration was encouraged by the German rulers until the eighteenth century, when a policy of German colonization was first adopted. Even then the

361 Lithuanian population was allowed complete cultural liberty until after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870; nor was the campaign then initiated for the Germanization of the district ever carried to such extreme lengths as to alienate the loyalty of the Lithuanians to the [162] Crown. In 1918 the population of the city itself was almost entirely German, while the bulk of the inhabitants in the country districts were of Germanized Lithuanian-speaking stock, although a certain number were bilingual.[1] The majority had adopted the Protestant faith of their German rulers.

361 438 Memel's prosperity, under the German Empire, was based on the timber trade and its dependent industries; a considerable amount of flax, grain, and other agricultural produce was also exported, and, largely owing to German enterprise, iron foundries, shipbuilding yards, breweries, and chemical factories had been set up.

648 361 *The Post-War Settlement.* At the Peace Conference in Paris there was some discussion of a French proposal to constitute a Greater Poland, which should include the whole of Lithuania as well as an outlet to the sea at Memel. Eventually, however, it was decided to detach the Memel district from Germany with a view to handing it over to the new Lithuanian Republic, if and when that country should have received *de jure* recognition. In spite of German protests,[2] therefore, a clause was inserted in the Treaty of Versailles (Article 99) to the effect that Germany renounced all right to the territory in favour of the Allied Powers, and undertook to accept the settlement made in regard to it 'particularly in so far as concerns the nationality of the inhabitants'.

Even after the *de jure* recognition of Lithuania by the Allied Powers, which was delayed, owing to the Vilna dispute, until November 1922, the future of Memel remained undecided. In the meantime, the administration of the territory had been taken over on behalf of the Allies by Général Odry, who was later replaced by a French High Commissioner, M. Petisné.[3] Alarmed by a French

1

162 191 TABLE 11. *Population of the Memel Territory.*

Date of census	*German-speaking*	*Lithuanian-speaking*	*Bilingual*	*Memel-landers*	*Others*	*Total*
1910	71,191	67,345	1,970	..	260	140,766
1925	61,671	39,106	..	35,690	5,373	141,840

[2] In a Note of May 29, 1919, Germany contested that the inhabitants were predominantly German—the city of Memel, in particular, being a purely German town—and had never desired such a separation; moreover, they offered to establish a free zone in the harbour of Memel, in which Poland, as well as Lithuania, should be accorded liberal privileges. The Allied Powers replied that the district as a whole was predominantly Lithuanian in origin and speech, and that the port of Memel was the only sea outlet for Lithuania.

[3] A Committee of Seven, which had been appointed by a preliminary Parliament (elected

1. [i.e. Memel -- Analyst]

1: Anonymous U-4 (no date)1938 RB1 Baltic States RB1
Lithuania

proposal for the constitution of Memel as a Free City on the model of Danzig, the Lithuanian Government finally decided to follow the example of the successful Polish *coup* in Vilna in 1920. A rising, organized by bands of Lithuanians who had crossed the frontier on January 10, 1923, was followed by an invasion of Lithuanian troops, on the very day when French troops were marching into the Ruhr. The French garrison was forced to give way on the 15th, a local Diet was summoned which voted the union of the Territory with Lithuania, subject to a mild degree of autonomy, and a Provisional Government was set up.

A special Inter-Allied Commission, dispatched to investigate the situation, virtually acquiesced in this *fait accompli*, withdrew the French High Commissioner and troops, and appointed a new and more moderate, but none the less predominantly Lithuanian, government. After refusing to accept a convention drafted by the Conference of Ambassadors, chiefly because of a proposal to allow Poland a share in the management of the port, the Government in Kaunas consented on May 17, 1924, to sign a revised convention drafted by a Commission of the League of Nations under the chairmanship of Mr. Norman Davis.

By the Memel Convention of 1924,[1] which came into force on August 25, 1925, the Allied Powers (Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan) transferred to Lithuania, subject to certain conditions, all the rights ceded to them by Germany over the Memel Territory, which was henceforth to constitute, under Lithuanian sovereignty, a unit enjoying autonomy within certain limits. The Statute appended provides for the constitution of a Chamber of Representatives elected for three years by citizens of the Territory, by universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage,[2] and for the appointment of a Governor by the President of the Lithuanian Republic. The Governor must promulgate the laws voted by the Memel Diet unless he vetoes them as exceeding the competence of the Territory,[3] or as being incompatible with Lithuania's Constitution or international obligations. He must convoke the Diet at the request of one-third of its members, and may dissolve it in agreement with the Directorate,

by the district assemblies) to carry on the administration in conjunction with a German High Commissioner during the Paris Conference, was retained as a Directory under the French administration.

[1] For text see British White Paper, Cmd. 2541.

[2] The Territory also sends deputies to the Lithuanian Diet, elected in accordance with the Lithuanian electoral law.

[3] Local affairs, including public worship, education, social welfare and labour legislation, organization of the judicial system, local taxation, &c., are within the competence of the Memel authorities. The police force is local, but is entitled to request the assistance of the Lithuanian police; the judiciary, which is also local but subject to the control of a special department of the Lithuanian Supreme Court, is appointed by the Directorate.

642 in which case elections must take place within six weeks. The ad-
●361 ministration is entrusted to a Directorate of five members, who must be citizens of the Territory; the President is appointed by the Governor, and himself appoints the other members, but the Directorate holds office only so long as it possesses the confidence of the Diet.

648 It is stipulated in an Annex that the Lithuanian Government shall
504 conform to the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles concerning the Niemen; that the port of Memel shall be considered as a part of international concern, and subject to the recommendation adopted by the Barcelona Conference; and that the harbour shall be administered by a Harbour Board consisting of three members, appointed respectively by the Lithuanian Government, the Memel Territory, and the League's Communications and Transit Organization.[1]

648 It is important to note that the Memel Convention is not an
361 instrument of the League of Nations, although members of the Council may draw the attention of the Council to any infraction of its provisions, and Lithuania undertakes to submit all disputes between her and the other signatories to the Permanent Court of International Justice, whose decision is binding. Moreover, apart from the recognition of German and Lithuanian on the same footing as official languages, the Minorities Declaration made by Lithuania respecting the rest of her territories applies to Memel also. Unlike Danzig, however, Memel is placed under the guarantee of the four Allied Powers signatory to the Convention, and not under that of the League.

642 *The Working of the Convention, 1925–32.* The Constitution thus
361 imposed on Memel created an extremely difficult situation. It became
578 clear after the first elections to the Diet, when twenty-seven Germans and only two Lithuanians were returned, that the great majority of the population was anti-Lithuanian in sympathy. Yet the Governor appointed by the Lithuanian Government was expected to choose a Directorate having the confidence of the Diet. If he did so, he was bound before very long to lose the confidence of the Government at Kaunas; if he did not, his rule was unconstitutional. The result was that events in Memel tended to repeat themselves in a more or less regular series. Elections were usually followed at first by a period of relative calm; then came a phase of conflict between the Diet and the Governor, accompanied by frequent changes of Directorate; this was terminated by the dissolution of the Diet, and a period of unconstitutional administration by the Governor; finally Germany would appeal to the League Council, and the Governor

[1] The League nominee is to give special attention to international economic interests, but must not be a national of any riparian State of the Niemen; thus Lithuania gained her point in the dispute as to whether Poland should be represented on the Board.

would feel compelled to allow new elections. Between 1925 and 1933 this cycle recurred three times.

Between 1925 and 1927 three Directorates fell in quick succession owing to no-confidence votes by the Diet, until, in February 1927, the Governor dissolved the Diet and carried on the administration by a Directorate of his own nomination. As a result of an appeal to the League Council by Germany,[1] new elections were held in August, when the German parties lost four seats to the Lithuanians.[2]

A peaceful phase followed the elections of 1927, owing to the fact that M. Voldemaras' anti-Polish policy inclined him towards a *rapprochement* with Germany; but, with the rise to power of his less Germanophil successor, M. Sleževičius, in 1929, and with the introduction of a high tariff on agricultural produce in Germany in 1930, tension increased again. During 1930 the Diet twice voted no-confidence in the Directorate, and in August it was dissolved by the Governor, Colonel Merkys. Complaints referring to the prolongation of martial law, which had been extended to Memel on its introduction in Lithuania in 1926, and to various alleged violations of the Constitution, were now addressed to the League Council by members of the Diet and by Germany. The latter, however, withdrew her petition after conversations between the German and Lithuanian Foreign Ministers.

Again, after the elections of October 1930, in which the Lithuanians won five out of the twenty-nine seats, there was a comparative lull,[3] owing to the appointment of Herr Böttcher, a German Memellander, as President of the Directorate. In December 1931, however, the Lithuanian Government accused Herr Böttcher of acting unconstitutionally in conducting negotiations with a foreign Power during a private visit to Berlin. In spite of receiving a vote of confidence from the Diet on his return, Herr Böttcher was arrested, and an entirely Lithuanian Directorate was appointed on February 6, 1932. Germany then brought the matter before the League Council, which adopted a report emphasizing the 'absolute necessity' of establishing without delay a Directorate enjoying the confidence of the Diet, but virtually transferred the responsibility for handling the dispute to the Allied Powers. When the Diet voted no-confidence in a new Directorate headed by a Lithuanian, M. Simaitis, the Government

[1] For an account of the disputes between Germany and Lithuania over the question of procedure in petitions to the Council, see I. F. D. Morrow, *The Peace Settlement in the German-Polish Borderlands* (Oxford University Press, 1936), pp. 446–8.

[2] Probably owing to the emigration of thousands who opted for German nationality.

[3] In May 1931, however, Germany laid before the Council complaints over financial questions and over the continuance of martial law. The former were finally settled by a Financial Agreement signed on August 18, 1932; the latter was left to be handled by the Allied Powers, who in June 1931 addressed a joint Note to the Lithuanian Government recommending the abolition of martial law, without any result whatever.

642 dissolved it on March 22, in spite of a warning from the Allied
361 Powers. The Powers, therefore, instituted proceedings against
648 Lithuania at the Hague Court on April 11.[2] Judgement was not delivered until August 11,[1] when the Court decided that the Governor was entitled, for the protection of the interests of the Lithuanian State, and if no other action could be taken, to dismiss the President of the Directorate in case of serious acts which violated the Memel Convention, or which were calculated to prejudice the sovereignty of Lithuania; that such dismissal did not by itself involve the dismissal of the other members of the Directorate; that the dismissal of Herr Böttcher and the appointment of M. Simaitis were in order; but that the dissolution of the Diet was not in order.

Meanwhile the elections for the new Diet had taken place in May, and, in spite of German accusations that the Lithuanians had been guilty of shameless manipulation, the latter only succeeded in securing five seats. As usual the elections were followed by a peaceful interlude, in consequence of the appointment of a more liberal-minded Governor, M. Bylys, to succeed Colonel Merkys, and of a German President of the Directorate, Dr. Schreiber. In August a financial agreement was concluded between the Lithuanian Government and the Memel Territory.

648 *The Advent of National-Socialism.* The Schreiber Directorate's chances of stabilizing conditions were to a large extent destroyed by the accession of Herr Hitler to power in Germany in January 1933, and were still further diminished by the German-Polish *rapprochement* of 1934, up till when the common hostility of Germany and Lithuania to Poland had exercised a moderating influence on their mutual relations.

361 In the summer of 1933 two Nazi parties were founded in Memel;
668 the first, led by Pastor von Sass, with a Left Wing programme, was
661 called the *Christliche-Sozialistische Arbeitsgemeinschaft* (C.S.A.): the
648 second and more conservative, under Dr. Neumann, was known as the *Sovog* (*Sozialistische Volksorganisation*).[3] Alive to the danger of the movement, the Lithuanian Government in November 1933 appointed a new Governor, Dr. Novakas, to suppress it. Numerous foreign officials were dismissed—most of them citizens of the Reich; labour permits issued to foreigners in private employment were withdrawn; a law for the Defence of the State enacted on February 8, 1934, penalizing members of seditious organizations, was followed by the dissolution of both the Nazi parties and the arrest of Dr.

1. [1932 - Annl. I]

[1] For text see *The Permanent Court of International Justice*, Series A/B, No. 49, p. 337.

[2] The Nazi party in Germany supported the *Sovog* in preference to the C.S.A., and appears to have attempted in July to unify the two parties by recognizing Dr. Neumann as leader of all the Nazis in Memel.

Neumann and other leaders of the *Sovog*. This action called forth a German Note of protest, and the suspension of all local goods traffic across the frontier.[1]

In June Dr. Schreiber was dismissed on a charge of encouraging the Nazi movement, and was replaced at first by Dr. Reizgys, and later by M. Bruvelaitis, both of whom were Memellanders and appointed purely Lithuanian Directorates. The authorities now pursued the policy of reducing the Diet to impotence, firstly by disqualifying members of the Diet who belonged to 'seditious organisations',[2] and secondly by arranging that all the Lithuanian deputies should absent themselves, so that, on the rare occasions when the Diet met, a quorum was not present. In December the trial of 122 Nazis began in Kaunas, on charges of conspiracy for the reunion of Memel with Germany through armed revolt. Four prisoners were also accused of the murder of an official named Jesuttis, who was alleged to have betrayed Nazi plans to the Lithuanian authorities. Undeterred by indirect German pressure exerted through the reinforcement of troops on the frontier, or by representations made by the Guarantor Powers, the Court delivered heavy sentences in March 1935, including four death sentences on the murder charge.[3]

As a result of an appeal made by Herr Hitler during the visit of Sir John Simon and Mr. Eden to Berlin in March, a joint Note was addressed to Lithuania by Great Britain, France, and Italy on April 19, 1935,[4] urging an early meeting of the Diet, and the constitution of a Directorate possessing its confidence; the Lithuanian reply was unsatisfactory, but, in the meantime, M. Novakas had been succeeded as Governor by the more moderate M. Kurkauskas, and the German parties had been invited to collaborate in the reconstitution of the Directorate. Shortly after their refusal to do so, the three-year term of the Diet expired, on May 4, and new elections were not held until September. In the meantime the electoral law was amended in such a way as to deprive several candidates (including Dr. Schreiber) of the now united front of pro-German parties, known as the *Einheitsliste*,[5] of their electoral rights and Lithuanian citizen-

[1] Even the transit through Germany of goods destined for Lithuania was later prohibited.

[2] The non-Nazi, but German, *Landwirtschaftspartei* was now included in this category.

[3] These were later commuted to life imprisonment.

[4] In July 1934 the Powers had, in reply to a German Note complaining of the situation, adopted the line that complaints should be addressed to the League Council; and, although a committee of jurists appointed by the Council to consider two petitions presented by the Vice-President of the Diet in the following September had pronounced that infringements of the Statute had taken place, the matter had not been brought up for further discussion by the Council—owing, perhaps, to the pre-occupation of the Powers with the Saar Plebiscite.

[5] The *Einheitsliste* included all the German parties except the Social-Democrats, as well as a number of Lithuanians. It aimed ostensibly at the maintenance of the autonomous régime, but was supported by vigorous propaganda from the German Reich.

1: Anonymous U-4 (no date) 1938 RB1 Baltic States RB1
Lithuania

ship, and to disenfranchise a large number of voters. Influenced, however, by Herr Hitler's bitter denunciations in the Reichstag on September 15, and by a further *démarche* of the three Powers on the 12th, the Lithuanian Government at last agreed to make certain concessions with regard to the German parties and to the conduct of the elections, which were watched by the British *Chargé d'affaires* at Kaunas, and were on the whole fairly conducted. The net result of all these efforts was the election of twenty-four candidates of the *Einheitsliste* and five Lithuanians; thus the latter failed to gain a single seat.

The usual post-election period of appeasement ensued; for—after the failure of two attempts to form a Directorate under a Lithuanian President—M. Baldžius, a Lithuanian Memellander and a member of the *Einheitsliste*, was appointed President.[1] The new Directorate, which received a vote of confidence from the Diet in December, repealed a number of anti-Nazi measures and began the reinstatement of officials who had been dismissed on political grounds. During 1936, moreover, there was a marked improvement in German-Lithuanian relations, beginning with a Lithuanian request for British mediation at the end of 1935, and continuing with a *rapprochement* initiated by Germany with startling suddenness in the spring of 1936;[2] and economic conditions in Memel were considerably benefited by a frontier traffic agreement concluded between the two countries in the following August. In October M. Kurkauskas resigned and was replaced by M. Kubilius, a Lithuanian lawyer who had hitherto played little part in political life. Although there were fresh arrests and trials of Nazis during 1936–7, on the other hand a large number of amnesties were granted,[3] and in February 1937 the British Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs was able to inform the House of Commons that 'the political position in the Memel territory is now generally satisfactory'.[4]

Note on the Economic Position of Memel

The economic prosperity of the Memel Territory is now entirely dependent upon that of Lithuania. This is primarily due to the fact

[1] In January 1936 M. Baldžius was replaced by M. Diomons, also a member of the *Einheitsliste*.

[2] See above, p. 88.

[3] Most of the National-Socialists imprisoned have now been released, including Pastor von Sass (in 1937) and Dr. Neumann (in 1938).

[4] Unfortunately, however, a fresh occasion for agitation was provided by the Kaunas Government's law of September 6, 1937, expropriating, against compensation, some 440 hectares of territory belonging to 24 German landowners, for military purposes and harbour development. A violent campaign ensued in the German press; and on September 25 M. Baldžius informed the Memel Diet that the Directorate had protested to the Governor against the law on the ground that the expropriation of property was exclusively the concern of the Memel authorities, and had declined to co-operate in its execution. The German Government themselves (although, not being signatories of the Convention, they had no

1: Anonymous U-4 (no date)1938 RB1 Baltic States RB1
Lithuania

that Memel is at present Lithuania's only practicable access to the sea. Moreover, since 1923 a large number of important industries have been established in and near the town with the object of supplying the Lithuanian hinterland; and thus a large proportion of Lithuania's industries are located in Memel. While these two circumstances have undoubtedly led to a noteworthy increase in the economic importance of Memel since the War, Memel has suffered much, on the other hand, through the closing of the Polish-Lithuanian frontier since 1920; for, as the result, what was formerly her chief source of income, namely the handling of timber floated down the Niemen from Poland, has ceased to exist.

At present over three-quarters of Lithuania's exports by value, and over two-thirds of her imports, are effected by sea through the port of Memel. In addition, goods are imported through Memel in transit for Russia and sometimes Latvia, and the same is true of exports. Traffic through Memel (in net registered tons) is now more than three-quarters that of Tallinn. During the last few years the practice of importing or exporting through the Latvian port of Liepāja has somewhat decreased in favour of Memel.

To this the completion in 1932 of the Siauliai–Telsiai–Kretinga railway has greatly contributed, since previously railway communication between Central Lithuania and Memel involved a long detour, either to the south, almost as far as Tilsit, or to the north through Latvian territory; and Liepāja was thus nearer to Kaunas than was Memel. The result of this increase can be seen from the following table:

TABLE 12. *Imports, Exports, and Shipping through Memel, 1932–7*

	Exports from Memel by sea (mill. lits)	*Percentage of total Lithuanian exports*	*Imports into Memel by sea (mill. lits)*	*Percentage of total Lithuanian imports*	*Shipping entered through Memel ('000 net registered tons)*
1932	123·6	65·4	78·3	46·9	519·7
1933	106·6	66·6	79·0	55·6	600·7
1934	97·3	66·1	83·9	60·5	622·8
1935	118·2	77·6	80·0	62·2	691·3
1936	149·4	78·4	106·2	68·0	788·5
1937	157·0	75·3	145·0	68·0	844·7

Out of the 844,700 net registered tons of shipping entering Memel during 1937, 294,400 tons were German, 150,000 Swedish, and 145,800

locus standi) protested at Kaunas, but were told that the law was valid under the Statute and could not be altered, although guarantees could be given that it would not be used for other than its ostensible purpose.

439 tons British. The Niemen is navigable as far as the Lithuanian-
505 Polish 'administrative line', and is used for cargo traffic as far as
361 Kaunas.

361 The administration of the harbour is provided for in an annex to
504 the Memel Statute of 1924, and is controlled by a board consisting
475 of one member appointed by the Lithuanian Government, one by the Memel Directorate, and one by the League of Nations. Since 1924 noteworthy steps have been taken to improve the technical equipment of the port. The harbour has been extended and deepened, docks have been excavated, cranes have been installed, and ware-
[457] houses built, the cost, running into 'several tens of millions of lits',[1] being borne mainly by the Lithuanian Government. Some of the expenditure, however, has been met out of a loan issued by the city in 1927 amounting to 4,000,000 RM. nominal and offered in Germany.

361 As has already been mentioned, Memel is a comparatively impor-
438 tant industrial centre. Of the 1,056 industrial enterprises in Lithuania employing 5 or more workmen at the beginning of 1937, 137 were in Memel, and of the 30,561 persons employed in such industries throughout Lithuania, 8,112 were employed in the Memel Territory. The more important industries include sawmills, veneer works, chemical fertilizer plants, and cellulose undertakings. There are also textile and tobacco factories of some size.

361 Outside the industrial district of the Territory the principal
241 occupation is agriculture. It is impossible to give any indication as
439 to the volume of production, since the figures are included with those of Lithuania proper. According to the available information, however, there is normally a small surplus of production for export; and since the easiest, if not the only, market is East Prussia, the agricultural population of the Territory suffered considerably from the virtual suspension of commercial intercourse between Lithuania and Germany owing to the dispute of 1932–5. The Agreement of August 1936 was consequently followed by an appreciable improvement.

361 The Statute of 1924 gives the Administration powers to levy direct
651 and indirect taxation inside the Territory with the exception of
[652] Customs and excise duties and certain monopolies. The Territory has a separate budget, which in 1934 balanced at about 14 million lits. The only funded debt outstanding is the loan of 1927 already mentioned.[1] Owing to the harbour's international importance, there is a comparatively large number of commercial and other banks domiciled in the Territory.

[1] *Lithuanian Telegraph Agency (Elta) Service*, March 1936.

1[see above, line 12 -- Analyst]

23: Shabad N-4 (no date) 1951 Rl Soviet Union Rl
Baltic Countries RB1

SU 361 438* BC 361 438

Vil'nyus (Vilnius—Polish *Wilno*, Russian *Vil'na*) lies amid forests and hills on the Viliya River, at the mouth of the Vileyka. Founded in the tenth century, it became the capital of Lithuania in the fourteenth century and the seat of a university in the sixteenth century. Following 125 years of Russian domination, it became one of the most contested cities of Europe in the period between the two World Wars. It was fought over by the Soviets, the Lithuanians, and the Poles in the years following the First World War and was part of Poland from 1922 until 1939. It is a major rail center on the Leningrad-Warsaw and Moscow-Minsk-Kaliningrad lines, with a population of 244,500.* It has metalworking industries, which produce agricultural implements, electric motors, and radio equipment, lumber, paper, and clothing mills, shoemaking and fertilizer plants, and large food industries. In 1947 the city limits were considerably expanded to incorporate the town of Nauya Vil'nya (Nauja Vilnia), six miles to the east and the seat of a prefabricated-house industry and the first machine-tool plant of Lithuania.

Kaunas (Russian *Kovno*), the former capital, is the chief industrial center of the republic, on the Neman River, at the mouth of the Viliya. It has rail shops, metalworks, an automobile repair plant, textile and knitting mills, and an important chemical industry, producing rubber goods, paints, and pharmaceutical products. Its lumber and match mills and tobacco, meat-packing and flour industries are also notable.

Klaypeda (Klaipėda—German *Memel*) is a major ice-free port north of the mouth of the Neman River. It has large pulp and paper industries, a veneering mill, textile plants, and produces superphosphate fertilizer. To the north, at Palanga, there are amber-processing works. To the south, on the Kurland Spit, a sand spit barring the lagoon known as Kurland Gulf, are the seaside resorts and fishing villages of Yuodkrante (Juodkrante), Preyla (Preila), and Nida.

Panevezhis (Panevėžys) is the most important sugar and flour-milling center of Lithuania; it has also metalworking, chemical, textile, and lumber industries.

Shaulyay (Šiauliai) has a large meat-packing and dairy industry, with associated tanning and shoe plants. Paper, bicycles, and alabaster are manufactured.

* An estimate based on the local election of 1948.

23: Shabad N-4 (no date) 1951 Rl Soviet Union Rl
Baltic Countries RBI

industry, which has plants scattered throughout all the small towns of the republic, mainly in the north and the west, leads the field. Meat packing, flour milling, and sugar refining are other activities. Next in importance are the engineering and the textile industries, which are concentrated at Riga and Liepaya. Also produced are matches, paper, rubber goods, chemicals, and tobacco. Fisheries are important along the coast, sardines, herring, and cod constituting the largest catch. Of all the Baltic republics, Latvia has the greatest tourist trade which descends yearly on the famous Riga beaches west of the city and the health resort (sulphur springs) of Kemeri near by.

Livestock raising is the chief agricultural occupation, with emphasis on dairy farming and milk, butter, and cheese production. Hogs are raised for bacon and other meat products, which together with eggs form the chief export items. The development of stock raising, as elsewhere in the Baltic Region, is favored by the humid climate and the abundance of meadowland. Crops are strongly slanted toward the production of fodder grasses and potatoes for stock feed. Grains cover about one half the sown acreage and are also partly used for forage. Rye, oats, and barley are emphasized. The main industrial crops are flax and sugar beets; garden crops are grown in a few suburban areas.

Power for the industry is furnished chiefly by the Kegums hydroelectric station on the Western Dvina, southeast of Ogre. This plant, which has a capacity of 55,000 kilowatts, is the only major water-power producer in the Baltic Region. The local peat supply, which is used in form of briquettes, is also of some importance in the industrial fuel scheme, although to a lesser extent than in Lithuania.

Riga, located on the Western Dvina, its center about 10 miles from the Gulf of Riga, of the Baltic Sea, is the largest city in the Baltic Region. An old city, dating from the early thirteenth century, it contains two thirds of all the Latvian industries. It is a large port, the terminus of a number of rail lines and of the timber flotage on the river. Its chief industries are its engineering enterprises, which produce rolling stock for electric trains, subways, and tramways, electrical equipment for automobiles, and telephone and radio apparatus. In its northeastern outskirts, on lake Kishozero, are superphospate and paper mills. Other products are textiles, glass, cement, rubber goods, and bicycles. Its port installations and shipyards extend along both sides of the river to the outer port of Daugavgriva, where most of the lumber is loaded. West of the city, between the Lielupe and the sea, on a narrow sand

23: Shabad N-4 (no date) 1951 Rl Soviet Union Rl
Balte Countries RB1

spit, lies Rigas Yurmala (Rigas Jurmala), which the Russians call *Vzmor'ye*. This noted vacation area, which consists of nine adjacent seaside resorts extending for more than 10 miles along the beach, was incorporated into the city in 1946. The population of Riga, which amounted to about 400,000 on the eve of the Second World War, was 390,000 in 1947.*

South of Riga, on the railroad to Kaunas, is Yelgava (Jelgava—German *Mitau*, Russian *Mitava*), the largest textile center of the republic, engaged mainly in linen milling; it is also the seat of an important sugar industry.

The port of Liepaya (Liepāja—German *Libau*, Russian *Libava*), the second largest of the republic, is ice-free nearly all year round. It has important shipbuilding, docking, and naval-base installations. Site of the only metallurgical (steel milling) plant of the Baltic Region, it has railroad repair shops, machine construction works, and chemical, lumber, and fish-canning industries.

To the north is the third port of Latvia, Ventspils (German *Windau*, Russian *Vindava*), which also engages in metalworking, lumber, and light industries.

Daugavpils (German *Dünaburg*, Russian *Dvinsk*), the center of Latgale, lies in the most densely settled portion of the republic, at the intersection of important rail and highway routes. It has important railroad shops, as well as metalworking, furniture, textile, and food industries.

Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic

Capital, Tallin (Tallinn); area, 17,400, population, 1,000,000

The Estonian SSR is the northernmost Baltic republic, situated between the gulfs of Finland in the north and Riga in the southwest. Its area and population are smaller than those of either Latvia or Lithuania. The republic includes the seventy islands of the Moonsund archipelago, off the west coast, including Sarema (Saaremaa), Khiuma (Hiiumaa), Mukhu (Muhu), and Vormsi.

In the northern part is a lowland, having large sandy and swampy expanses. It breaks off abruptly on the coast of the Gulf of Finland, forming cliff-like limestone escarpments. The coast here is deeply dissected and contains a large number of good natural harbors. Toward the south the relief becomes hilly and rises in glacial moraines to over

* An estimate based on the Republic election.

BALTIC REGION

Narva, on the Narva River between Lake Peipus and the Gulf of Finland, is an old fortress city, with the forts of Ivangorod and Hermannstadt on opposite banks of the river. It is noted as a textile center, the home of the Krengol'm (Kreenholm) cotton and linen mill, powered by a hydroelectric plant on the Narva River. The suburb of Ivangorod, on the right bank of the Narva, was placed into Leningrad Oblast of the Russian SFSR as the result of a boundary change in 1945.

Kaliningrad Oblast (Russian SFSR)

Capital, Kaliningrad; area, *c.* 6,100, population, 600,000

Kaliningrad Oblast was organized in the northern part of East Prussia, north of a line passing north of Goldap and Braniewo (German *Braunsberg*), which was assigned by the Berlin Conference in 1945 to the USSR. The oblast lies on the Baltic Sea and is bordered in the east by the Lithuanian SSR along the Neman River and in the south by Poland. The territory is level lowland rising slightly toward the south and characterized by a humid climate, with mild winters and cool summers. It is drained by the Neman in the northeast and by the Pregel' in the southeast. Along the coast it includes portions of the two lagoon-like inlets characteristic of this section of the Baltic Sea—Kurland Lagoon in the north and Vistula Lagoon in the south. Each lagoon is separated from the sea by a long, narrow sand bar (*Nehrung*), which leaves only a narrow passage at the northern end. Amber, peat, and lignite are the chief mineral resources.

As in the case of other territories formerly held by an enemy nation (Japanese part of Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands), no provision was made to establish the northern part of East Prussia as an autonomous area. Instead, the German population which was left at the time of the Russian occupation, estimated at 100,000, was deprived of minority rights similar to those provided for other nationalities in the USSR. Only in the field of education did the Russian administration officially acknowledge the existence of a German minority by establishing a limited number of German schools. After a brief existence as a special okrug, the area was organized as Königsberg Oblast in April, 1946, and renamed Kaliningrad Oblast in July, 1946. Since a Russian majority is mandatory in the population of the oblasts of the Russian SFSR, Russian immigration into the oblast was organized from the central European USSR, where a relatively high population density prevails in oblasts such as Smolensk, Bryansk, Pskov, Novgorod, Kostroma,

21; Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1
Baltic Countries R61

Ba. 167 S.U. 563 Russia proper. It started at the beginning of the nineteenth century when the population of entire villages left their homes after an unsuccessful revolt against the German Baltic barons. In the second half, and particularly in the last few years of the nineteenth century, a new wave of Latvian and Estonian peasant immigrants came to Russia proper, but in the twentieth century the Baltic immigration changed its character. The 1905 Revolution was particularly violent in Latvia and many revolutionary Latvian workers fled to Russia to escape the vengeance of the German landowners. In the years 1919–21, after the collapse of the first Soviet Latvia, about 60,000 to 70,000 Latvian communists and their sympathizers settled down in Soviet Russia. In the same period a number of Latvian and Estonian agricultural colonists left their Russian homes and went to the newly established Baltic 'bourgeois Republics', but the bulk of the colonists remained in Russia, even under the Soviet régime.

Ba. 167 361 The two main centres of Estonian and Latvian immigration in Russia were the Western border areas near the Estonian and Latvian state frontiers and Western Siberia. More than half of all the Estonians of the U.S.S.R. – 75,000 to be exact – lived in the Western part of that administrative area which originally formed the Leningrad Province, but which later was subdivided into the Provinces of Leningrad and Pskov. Many of the Estonians of the Leningrad Province who were organized into 123 collective farms and had 90 national schools at their disposal had settled down in the nearest vicinity of 'bourgeois Estonia'. Some inhabited villages on the left bank of Lake Peipus which separates Estonia from the U.S.S.R.[23] One of the Soviet border territories comprising an Estonian minority was given the name of the Estonian communist leader, Victor Kingisepp (1888–1922), who was executed by the Estonian 'counter-revolution'. The Kingisepp District was, however, no autonomous Estonian area.

The much smaller community of Latvian peasant colonists of the Leningrad Province had twenty-six National Collective Farms and twenty-one national schools.[24] The real strength of the Latvian ethnical group in the Soviet Union lay in the existence of strong and well-organized colonies in numerous Soviet cities such as Leningrad, Moscow, Kharkov, Dniepropetrovsk, Vitebsk and Smolensk. A 'Foreign Bureau of the Latvian Communist Party' co-ordinated the activities of these colonies and a cultural organization, 'Prometei', catered for their intellectual welfare. 'Prometei' was in charge of three Latvian theatres in Moscow, Smolensk and Leningrad. It had a publishing house of its own which printed communist propaganda literature as well as Latvian translations of Soviet authors and Russian classics.[25] The Soviet Latvians also had two daily newspapers, one published in Leningrad, the other in Novosibirsk and there existed special Latvian children's magazines, Komsomol publications and a Latvian library and art review.[26]

Ba. 659 665